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WHY I HAVE STAYED IN CLUB WORK SIX YEARS

A radio talk by Gordon Hildrup, 4-H club member, Spotsylvania County, Virginia, delivered in the National 4-H Club Radio Program, October 5, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 57 associate NBC radio stations.

--ooOoo--

I have been asked to tell you why I have been in club work six years. I haven't been asked to say why I joined a 4-H club, but I'd like to say something about that first.

Before I was ten years old I heard 4-H club work explained to the boys and girls in the Chancellor school, which I have been attending almost ever since I can remember. I became very much interested and decided that I was going to join our club as soon as I was old enough. I believe that club work had much to offer me. So I became a member at the age of 10; that was six years ago. The experience of these last six years has meant more to me than I expected. The sense of ownership and personal responsibility, which I did not foresee seven or eight years ago, has made things so much more lively and interesting.

Now I'll try to tell you why I have stayed in club work six years. Like every club member, I have my projects - corn, potatoes, pig, calf and poultry - and keep records, without which ownership does not seem so real but through which a boy or girl is urged on to success. The work gives me something definite to do and to think about. It teaches me that there is more in farming than just good, hard work.

I sometimes wonder if I ever would have learned how interesting and profitable farming can be, if it had not been for the 4-H club and our county agent. I am sure I wouldn't have learned so early in life. I consider that I am fortunate to know the things that club work has taught me.

When I undertake to grow corn, I know that the seed must be of the best variety, pure and free from disease; that it must be planted in a well-prepared and fertile soil; ^{and} that it must be cultivated properly.

I have learned the value of those varieties of farm crops adapted to the soil and climate of our locality and against varieties which are not adapted. I know what it means to prepare the soil and to cultivate properly, and to use the right kind and right amount of fertilizer.

I have been taught that my pig or my calf or my chickens must be of pure bred stock; no scrubs are allowed in our club work. The importance of good and careful feeding and proper housing of livestock and poultry has been impressed upon me through advice and experience.

One of the most important things learned in club work, the thing that proves to us whether we are making a success of our efforts, is keeping correct records of our time and money. From our records we can tell about our costs and profits. I am of the opinion that if all farmers kept a correct record of their expenses and earnings, there would be less men who go into bankruptcy, fewer unhappy homes and better men and women.

(over)

Those are some of the reasons why I have stayed in club work six years - the "money" reason, you might call them. Here are others of a different kind but worth just as much.

Through our organized club I am taught parliamentary practices, how to preside, how to cooperate, and how best to lend myself to group activities. I thoroughly enjoy meeting with my fellow club members at our regular monthly meeting, listening to and joining in the discussions about different projects and other club activities.

If I didn't know it before, I know now that partnership is equal to or better than ownership. I like being a partner with Dad. I am proud that I can help him share the responsibility and care of the livestock and farm. I like also to help others who are less fortunate by passing on to them some of the things which I am receiving from my club work.

Those are my reasons -- and I want to urge every boy and girl who may be listening in, if you are not club members, to join your local club at once and thus help yourself and also help others. For myself, I expect to remain in club work as long as I can and to be loyal to it always. And right now I feel like yelling, "Hurrah for Club Work!"